

October 20, 2006

VIA EMAIL

Chairman Kevin Martin
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 06-74, Support for AT&T BellSouth Merger

Dear Commissioners:

The Executive Committee of the St. Tammany Economic Development Foundation, at their October 20, 2006 Executive Planning Session, voted to support and are writing to urge the expeditious approval of the BellSouth / AT&T merger. We know the factors, from infrastructure to workforce, that set communities apart and poise them for economic growth. This merger will address one of the most critical needs required of any community seeking to grow its economy and new jobs – ubiquitous broadband Internet access.

The proposed AT&T / BellSouth merger could be the catalyst for dynamic economic change in our rural communities, especially. As a proposed condition of the merger, AT&T and BellSouth have committed to deliver *affordable* and *universal* access to broadband, including:

- ✓ A new residential broadband offering set at \$10 per month, affording many rural communities a viable alternative to dial access;
- ✓ A pledge to provide broadband Internet access to *all* residential living units in the AT&T / BellSouth service area, providing economic developers a necessary tool to recruit new economic development prospects to our rural communities.

The merger of these great American companies will significantly enhance the economic viability of the communities we serve. We ask you to approve the AT&T / BellSouth merger without further delay.

Sincerely,



Brenda Reine
Executive Director

Cc: Marlene Dortch, Commission Secretary